

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT USDA/ NRCS



Serving the public through government employment is a noble career
and one that strengthens our nation.

Student Educational Employment Program



The Student Educational Employment Program has two components available to all levels of students:

- High School
- Vocational and Technical
- Associate Degree
- Baccalaureate Degree
- Masters Degree
- PHD Degree students

Employment is under the Excepted Service Authority of USDA/NRCS

Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)

- ✓ Job opportunities under this component offer you temporary employment.
- ✓ Employment can range from summer jobs to positions that can last for as long as you are a student.
- ✓ These employment opportunities need not necessarily be related to your academic field of study.
- ✓ Can be converted to SCEP if academic field of study changes.

Student Career Employment Program (SCEP)

- ✓ Offers you valuable work experience directly related to your academic field of study.
- ✓ Provides formal periods of work and study while you are attending school.
- ✓ Requires a commitment by you, your school, and NRCS.
- ✓ You may be eligible for permanent employment after successfully completing your education and 640 hours of employment with NRCS.
- ✓ Mobility – different location each summer.
- ✓ Mentor – someone who will guide you during your formal education and one year into your career appointment.

Program Features Under Both Components

- ✓ Students may be employed year round
- ✓ Flexible schedule of work assignments
- ✓ Open to all students...high school, under-graduate, graduate, and vocational/technical

Eligibility Requirements

- A student enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree-seeking student (diploma, certificate, etc.),
- Taking at least half-time academic or vocational and technical course load in an accredited high school, technical or vocational school, 2-year or 4-year college or university, graduate or professional school, and
- A U.S. citizen, as it is required for conversion to permanent employment.

Benefits



• STEP

- Annual and Sick Leave



• SCEP

- Annual and Sick Leave
- Health Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Retirement

Student Performance Evaluation



Performance Evaluation:

- ✓ Each student's supervisor is responsible for completing a Performance Evaluation after each summer internship with NRCS. Once the evaluation is complete the supervisor will review the findings with the student.
- ✓ The purpose of the Performance Evaluation is to provide feedback for the student to encourage a successful career with NRCS.

Exit Interview



- ✓ Each student is responsible for completing the Exit Interview after each summer internship with NRCS.
- ✓ The form is returned to the ASTC for the area.
- ✓ The ASTC will forward it to the State Office.
- ✓ The purpose of the Exit Interview is to provide feedback to MN-NRCS to continue the enhancement of the summer intern program.

Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP)



Interns Who are They?



- ☐ Are hired under the Excepted Service.
- ☐ Are employees who have completed their formal education.
- ☐ Are full time employees with full benefits.
- ☐ Commit to a two year program that provides training and work experience.
- ☐ Can be non-competitively converted to a career conditional appointment after successful completion of the two year developmental program.

Benefits of an Internship

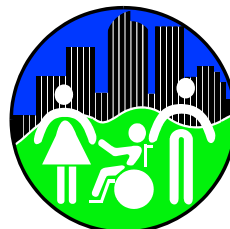
- Variety Of Experience
- Mobility
- Advice From Mentor And Others
- Performance In Present Position
- Annual and Sick Leave
- Life Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Retirement

Career Conditional Appointment

- Full time position
- Earn Annual and Sick Leave
- Health and Life Insurance
- Retirement
- Flex Spending
- Long Term Health Care
- Subject to a one year probationary period

Mentor Program

Students, Interns, and New Employees



Two Types of Mentors

- **Student Mentor**
 - Provides guidance during school years and the first year after appointment to a career conditional appointment.
- **Career Mentor**
 - Provides guidance to a new employee that has completed their formal education.

If you are wanting a mentor talk with your supervisor.



TOURS OF DUTY

- **Full Time**
 - 80 Hours Per Pay Period
- **Part Time**
 - 16 to 64 Hours Per Pay Period (Set Schedule of hours)
- **Intermittent**
 - Usually Less Than 64 Hours Per Pay Period (Hours vary)
 - Work Only when Needed, no set hours

\$\$ GRADES AND STEPS \$\$

GRADES: RANGE FROM 1-15 (At The State Level)

- ❖ Depends on education and/or experience
- ❖ Depends on level of knowledge, skills, and abilities
- ❖ Promotional potential varies

STEPS:

- ❖ Designates Pay Within A Grade
- ❖ Ten Steps – new employees start at Step 1

Waiting Periods:

- ❖ Steps 2, 3, and 4 are each 52 weeks
- ❖ Steps 5, 6, and 7 are each 104 weeks
- ❖ Steps 8, 9, and 10 are each 156 weeks

Fringe Benefits

- **Insurance**
 - Health
 - Life
- **Leave**
 - Annual
 - Sick
 - Other
- **Worker's Compensation**
- **Retirement**



HEALTH INSURANCE

- Numerous Plans To Choose From
- Must enroll within 60 days from EOD or wait until Open Season
- Pre-tax dollars to pay premium
- Government Pays Slightly More Than 70% Of Premium
- Self and Family Options
 - Family option covers dependent children until age 22
- Open Season - Once A Year – November
 - You may change plans or levels of coverage
 - Use my.nrcs page to make all changes

LIFE INSURANCE

- **Basic:** Equal To Salary Rounded To Next Higher Thousand Plus \$2,000
 - **Option A:** \$10,000
 - **Option B:** Multiples of Salary – One To Five Times
 - **Option C – Family:** \$5000 for spouse
\$2500 for each child
- Employees are automatically covered by basic unless waived. Optional Insurance is not automatic – you must take action to elect options.
- Open Seasons are rare: elections of coverage must be made within 31 days of EOD.

ANNUAL LEAVE



- Used For: Vacation And Other Personal Reasons
- Earning Rate:

0 – 3 Years	4 Hours Per Pay Period
3 -15 Years	6 Hours Per Pay Period
15+Years	8 Hours Per Pay Period
- Can Accumulate And Carryover: Maximum of 240 Hours

SICK LEAVE



- **Used**
 - When Incapacitated For Work (Illness, Injury)
 - For Doctor Appointment
 - Contagious Disease In Family
- **Earning Rate**
 - 4 Hours Per Pay Period
- **No Limit On Carryover**



Family Friendly Policies

Family and Medical Leave Act:

- Ensures that up to 12 weeks per year of **UNPAID** family and medical leave are available.

Leave for Family Care and Related purposes:

- Sick leave can be used to care for family members, to arrange for or attend funeral services of family members, and for absences relating to adopting a child. Federal employees can receive additional paid leave to serve as bone-marrow or organ donors.

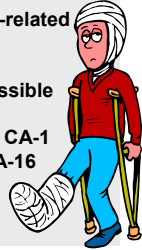
WORKERS' COMPENSATION

- For On – The – Job Injury or Illness
- Two – Thirds or Three – Fourths of Salary While Disabled
- COP – Continuation of Pay: Given in traumatic injury cases for a period not to exceed 45 calendar days.
- Medical Bills are Paid
- Report All Injuries immediately to your supervisor

Workers Compensation Procedures

Employee Responsibility:

- ✓ Notify supervisor immediately of all job-related accidents, injuries, or illnesses
- ✓ Obtain medical attention as soon as possible
- ✓ Complete the employee portion of form CA-1 and return it to your supervisor. CA-16 is needed if you seek medical treatment.



Obtaining Medical Care



- ✓ You have the right to select a private physician or hospital in the area for treatment. Generally, the area is defined as within 25 miles of your duty station or your home.
- ✓ Your supervisor is not permitted by OWCP to authorize treatment by Chiropractors.

Non-Reportable Accident



Any unintended occurrence involving property or employee on official duty, that causes:

- ✓ no loss of time beyond the day or shift of the injury,
- ✓ no charges for medical treatment, or
- ✓ no property damage.

RETIREMENT

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)

A three-part retirement system:

- ❖ Social Security
- ❖ Basic Benefit Plan
- ❖ Thrift Savings Plan

Basic Benefit Plan

- ❖ To be vested you must have at least 5 years of creditable civilian service. Your contribution is the difference between 7% of your basic pay and Social Security, or 0.80%
- ❖ If you leave Federal service and you are vested you may withdraw your contributions. However, if you do and later return to Federal service there is no redeposit option.

MINIMUM RETIREMENT AGES ARE:

<u>YEAR OF BIRTH</u>	<u>MINIMUM RETIREMENT AGE (MRA)</u>
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Before 1948	55
In 1948	55 and 2 Months
In 1949	55 and 4 Months
In 1950	55 and 6 Months
In 1951	55 and 8 Months
In 1952	55 and 10 Months
1953 – 1964	56
In 1965	56 and 2 Months
In 1966	56 and 4 Months
In 1967	56 and 6 Months
In 1968	56 and 8 Months
In 1969	56 and 10 Months
1970 and After	57

Years of Service

Immediate or Eligible Yrs of Service Met:

Age	Yrs of Eligible Service
62	5 yrs
60	20 yrs
MRA	30 yrs
MRA	10* yrs

*Reduced benefit unless postponed to lessen or eliminate age reduction.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

Eligibility:

- ✓ Can begin to contribute immediately
- ✓ Voluntary

Highlights:

- ✓ Tax deferred
- ✓ Five Investment Funds

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

Contributions:

- ✓ Agency Automatic (1%) Contribution
 - Not taken out of your salary, this contribution is made whether or not you contribute your own money
- ✓ Agency match after second open season
 - First 3% of Basic Pay, Agency matches \$1 for each \$1 you contribute
 - Next 2% of Basic Pay, Agency matches \$0.50 for each \$1.00 you contribute
- ✓ Agency contribution is up to 5%

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

You put in Total	Automatic Contribution	Match =
0%	1%	0% = 1%
1%	1%	1% = 3%
2%	1%	2% = 5%
3%	1%	3% = 7%
4%	1%	3.5% = 8.5%
5%	1%	4% = 10%

After three years of Federal civilian service you are vested in these contributions and their earnings.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

- You can contribute a percentage of your Basic pay or a whole dollar amount up to the following limits:

December 2004 – November 2005: 15%
December 2005 and beyond: no limit

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

- For more information go to the TSP website:

www.tsp.gov

WebTCas and Direct Deposit

- WebTCas is used to transmit your time and attendance to the National Finance Center (NFC).
- Direct Deposit of your payroll check is mandatory.

ICAMS



- ICAMS is the database NRCS uses to enter all personnel actions
- Interfaces with WebTCas
- Interfaces with NFC
- Data entries are processed one pay period behind a current pay period

Questions ?



NRCS is an Equal Opportunity Employer

